

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending in the present application. By this reply, claim 13 has been added.

It is noted, with appreciation, that the Examiner has indicated that claims 9-12 are allowed over the prior art of record. It is also noted and appreciated that the Examiner has indicated that claims 3-6 and 8, although objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 2, and 7 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Trafton et al., U.S. Patent 6,554,402. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention relates to an ink tank comprising a casing having a front wall formed with a coupling and a bag disposed in the casing and connected to the coupling. One of the objects of the present invention is to provide an ink tank that is easy to manufacture and thus, it is important that the casing of the ink tank is made from a minimum number of components, which not only provide a better ink tank structure but also reduces the cost and complexity in the manufacture of the ink tank structure. Thus, the ink tank according to an embodiment of the present invention contains a casing which includes a first shell and a second shell,

wherein the first shell 12 includes the entirety of the front wall 44 which is provided with a coupling 42.

As the Examiner will note, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the casing comprising the first shell includes the entirety of the front wall. As is apparent from Fig. 2 of the present application, the first shell 12 includes the entirety of the front wall 44 which is provided with the coupling 42. Because the first shell of the casing includes the entirety of the front wall 44 which, in turn, is provided with the coupling 42, the manufacture of the casing is greatly facilitated.

The Trafton et al. reference is directed to a replaceable ink cartridge that includes the feature wherein the orientation of the cartridge is provided in a particular fashion so as to identify it with a particular color of ink contained therein. In rejecting the claims, the Examiner particularly points to Figs. 11-12 and 16-17 to show an ink tank containing a casing having a front wall provided with a coupling which allegedly suggests the presently claimed invention. However, independent claim 1, as amended, recites a casing in which the first shell includes the entirety of the front wall whereas, as can be seen by referring to Fig. 12 of the referenced patent, the front wall of Trafton et al. includes two sub-parts.

In Trafton et al. as shown in Fig. 12, the first shell 50a is a first sub-part of the front wall, and the second shell 50b is a

second sub-part of the front wall. Thus, the first shell in the referenced patent does not include the entirety of the front wall, but rather is made up of component parts which unduly complicates both the structure itself and the method of manufacturing the structure. The referenced patent divides the front wall into first and second sub-parts and are to effectively accommodate the color identifier key assembly 66 which is the purpose to which the referenced patent is directed. Thus, the front wall structure of Trafton et al. is very complicated and, by definition, cannot provide the structural and manufacturing simplicity as defined by the presently claimed invention.

Accordingly, since the Trafton et al. patent is concerned with a completely different problem when compared to the presently claimed invention, it is understandable that the structure as disclosed therein is quite complicated when compared to that of the present invention and accordingly, cannot possibly suggest the presently claimed invention. Thus, it is believed that independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2 and 7 (due to the dependency), for all of the reasons set forth hereinabove, are not anticipated by the Trafton et al. patent nor or rendered obvious by the teachings of the Trafton et al. patent.

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 7, and

allowance of all of the claims in the present application, are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 and § 1.136(a), Applicants hereby petition for an extension of three (3) months in which to file a response to the outstanding Office Action. The required fee of \$1,020.00 is attached hereto.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Joseph A. Kolasch (Reg. No. 22,463) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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